What do we learn from clitics? The Polish case study.

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Bachelor thesis

Clitics pose a challenge to any linguistic theory that does not abandon the classical stratification of grammar in modules. Halfway between phonology and syntax, clitics present their own morphological features from both morphemes and syntactically independent elements — words. Revising the described typologies and taking Polish as a case study, our aim was to prove whether an on-going process of grammaticalization of these elements in this particular language exists or not. Bearing this in mind we designed a value judgment test that we spread online between target groups from 16 to 64 years old. The obtained data confirmed our hypothesis; as the age of the participants decreased, so did the acceptance of the mobility of clitics as well as their adjunction to non-verbal hosts. Therefore, the consequences deriving from these results suggest that a shift into a more usage-based approach that takes into consideration both the pragmatic context and language change on the basis of use might be necessary to account more satisfactorily for the phenomenon.

References


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